State of Connecticut
HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

Testimony in Support of Raised House Bill 6520
Human Services Committee
March 4, 2021

Chairs Abercrombie and Moore, Ranking Members Case and Berthel, and Members of the Human Services Committee, the House Republican Caucus appreciates the opportunity to present testimony in support of raised **House Bill Number 6520: An Act Concerning the Provision of Temporary State Services to Victims of Domestic Violence.**

This bill fast tracks the application process for victims seeking temporary benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), SAGA Cash Assistance, and the Care-4-Kids program.

Currently, these programs consider the income of all the family members in a household. While this process is appropriate for most benefit applicants, it fails to take into consideration the desperate and dangerous situation facing families experiencing domestic violence. In family units where the abuser is the sole income earner or earns income above the qualifying thresholds, victims find it difficult to financially detach themselves from their abusers out of fear of not having the financial resources needed to meet their basic living needs. House Bill 6520 will address this issue by excluding the income of the abuser from the SNAP, SAGA and Care-4-Kids programs and offering victims 90 days of temporary benefits as they try to move on with their lives. It should be noted that precedent for 90 days of temporary services already exists under Medicaid's reasonable opportunity rule that grants temporary benefits to applicants whose citizenship or immigration status can't be immediately verified and is pending further documentation.

The House Republican Caucus is grateful to the committee for raising this important bill. However, we have one suggestion to improve the language. We suggest that the bill be amended to ensure that temporary benefits are provided to victims who demonstrate intent to live apart from the abuser.

We urge the Human Services Committee to pass House Bill Number 6520 to protect families and to provide a path forward for victims of domestic violence. Please allow the full General Assembly the opportunity to debate this important legislation.